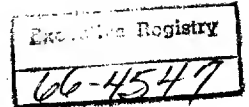


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Approved For Release 2005/06/23 : CIA-RDP79R00904A001200060011-3 0387

24 October 1966



MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: Attached ONE Special Memorandum, "Implications for North Vietnam of a Complete Break in Sino-Soviet Relations"

The attached ONE Special Memorandum assesses the consequences for North Vietnam of a Sino-Soviet split. It was done at the request of Chester Cooper, Special Assistant to Governor Harriman. The Board considered it, with representatives of OCI and SAVA, and it has been delivered to Mr. Cooper. We are sending copies to a number of officers within this building, but at present do not recommend any wider circulation.

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FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:

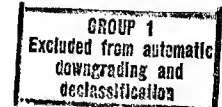


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OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

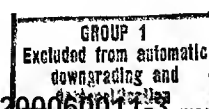
24 October 1966

SPECIAL MEMORANDUM NO. 17-66

SUBJECT: Implications for North Vietnam of a Complete
Break in Sino-Soviet Relations

1. A break in Sino-Soviet relations would depress North Vietnamese morale and somewhat intensify existing strains within the country's leadership. Hanoi's leaders would fear that their interests would increasingly become a pawn in the contest between Peking and Moscow. Hanoi would seek reassurances from each side that its aid to the DRV would continue unhindered.
2. We believe that the Soviets would not cut off or diminish their aid to North Vietnam. It is conceivable that they would use the threat as leverage to force Hanoi to negotiate, but we believe they would be most unlikely to do so.
3. We believe that China would probably restrict passage of Soviet military aid to North Vietnam. It would probably not close the route completely, because of criticism in the Communist world that it would thereby be sabotaging the North Vietnamese cause. However, Peking's growing isolation in the world Communist

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movement and its erratic domestic behavior make us less confident of its probable reaction than we are of Moscow's.

4. If Hanoi were forced to choose between China and the USSR, it would probably cast its lot with the former. Hanoi now regards the threat of Chinese intervention as the principal deterrent to US invasion which it fears more than it does Chinese occupation. Hanoi also shares with Peking the concept of protracted war in Vietnam and feels it can count on Chinese support in manpower and materiel for such a war. Only if North Vietnam became prepared to accept negotiations would it be likely to rely on the USSR to an extent that would risk a break with China.

5. Most Soviet aid to North Vietnam moves by sea. But a very significant portion of military supplies move by rail across China. If the China route were closed, Moscow would probably turn almost entirely to ocean shipping, though some small and essential cargoes might be air-lifted.

6. The Soviets have provided Hanoi with all its SAM equipment, most of its AAA and aircraft, and about half its small arms and ammunition. China is Hanoi's principal supplier of small naval craft and radar, and has provided nearly half of Hanoi's jet fighters and perhaps ten per cent of its AAA. If Soviet military aid were cut off, the Chinese could supply

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more fighter aircraft and substantially more small arms and ammunition. They could also supply Hanoi with some 57 mm AAA, but not in quantities to make much of an impact. They could provide additional fully-equipped Chinese AAA divisions. Consequently, North Vietnam could almost certainly continue the war for some time without further Soviet assistance. China would not, however, be able to supply SAMs and much of the related equipment; as North Vietnamese stocks were exhausted, the country's air defense capabilities would be seriously degraded.

FOR THE BOARD OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES:

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SHERMAN KENT
Chairman

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